

I could not help but come to the floor as I watched this discussion begin regarding some substitutes for this resolution. I must say, Mr. Speaker, it is most important that we reject those alternatives for the resolution is designed simply to give our Commander-in-Chief some flexibility as he goes forward in projecting our responsibilities for peace in the world.

Indeed, there are those who presume that this automatically means a war in Iraq. This resolution does not automatically take us to war. As a matter of fact, it is a tool for the Commander-in-Chief to indeed go forth with those efforts that are most important in terms of our future hopes for peace.

There is little doubt that America focused again upon the importance of our strength as a result of 9/11 just 1 year ago. There is little doubt that the world understands that a strong America is very important for peace.

I would suggest to my colleagues that the one thing that we could do to undermine that strength is to pass a resolution like this one that is before us at this moment. Indeed, my colleagues, there is much discussion about what the Commander-in-Chief has not done. In the past, there was a lot of discussion about the fact that perhaps his advisers were not as good as some would like.

We look at the Vice President, we look at the Secretary of State, we look at the Secretary of Defense. The community not so long ago was amazed at how great their strength might be. Do we presume that they have not been giving advice and counsel to the Commander-in-Chief?

Indeed, I believe they have a plan that will strengthen our ability to be a force in the world for the good.

Resolutions like this will take us exactly in the opposite direction. Let us not by actions today undermine the President's ability to lead.

At the same time, let me say that most of my colleagues know that I am a strong believer in a bipartisan force in this House. Let us not as a result of these votes today have one of our parties be the party working with the President for peace and have the other party be the party of the United Nations.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Lee amendment and commend my colleague from California for all of her work on behalf of this peaceful effort to resolve this issue.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have been told that he who lives by the sword shall eventually die by the sword.

The first call that I got this morning was from a woman named Barbara Mullarkey who said, "Danny, vote for peace."

I rise in strong support of the Lee amendment because it gives me the opportunity to vote the will of the people in my Congressional district who do not believe that we have made the case to go to war. The President has all of the flexibility that he needs to protect us. What he does not have is the flexibility to declare war. That flexibility is left to this Congress.

Vote for the Lee amendment. Vote for peace.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me the time.

I rise in support of the Lee amendment, and I am really surprised after listening to the debate for the last 17 hours why anybody would attack it. Indeed, the Lee amendment and the Lee resolution is the same as what the President has in his resolution if we see in section 2 where the President urges the support of the United States diplomatic efforts to strictly enforce through the United Nations, to obtain prompt and decisive action by the Security Council in the United Nations, that essentially this is the same thing that the Lee amendment does.

It seems to me that anybody who can support the President's amendment ought to support the Lee amendment. What the Lee amendment does not do is it does not leap before it looks. It says look before we leap into war, and I think the message here is very strong, that if the United States is going to leap into war before it looks. What kind of trust are we going to have with the rest of the arrangements around the world with the agreements we have had on treaties and trade treaties? What is going to happen to people who are traveling in the country? Is anybody going to be able to trust our country because we can say, well, if we do not like something we can go it alone?

It is very wise to support the Lee amendment. It is a good look before we leap.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, a parliamentary inquiry. I understand the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) has the right to close?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). That is correct.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

My alternative gives the United Nations a chance to do its job while we think through the ramifications of our actions, how many lives would be lost, what will this cost our economy. It provides a very pragmatic opportunity

to step back and explain to the American people the implications of authorizing a war. It will give us an opportunity to explain to the American people what our own intelligence agency means, and let me quote this, "Our intelligence agency says should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack could no longer be deterred, the probability would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist action."

Our action today could cause a reaction of catastrophic proportions, not only in terms of Saddam Hussein but in the destabilization of the Middle East and the setting of a dangerous precedent.

I plead with my colleagues to oppose this rush to war. It is morally wrong, it is financially irresponsible, and it is not in our national security interest. We must wait, we must ask these questions, we must know what the economic impact is. We must know what this does in terms of the loss of lives of our young men and women.

This is a day that we must urge reflection. We must urge this body to become attentive to the unanswered questions that are out there. If our own intelligence agencies say to us that authorizing the President's resolution to go to war; that is, supporting that effort to wage war, could be a provocative act against our country, that it could destabilize the region, that it could lead to possible terrorist action, that is very terrifying, Mr. Speaker.

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I believe that the House of Representatives must say no to establishing this dangerous precedent. We must not rush to war. We must give the United Nations time to do its work. Inspections worked in the 1990s. We must use the time that the United Nations needs, use that time for us to think through, to debate, and to be truthful to the American people. They deserve it. We need to be truthful with them as to what the cost of this rush to war would mean.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER).

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Lee amendment. This amendment is another abdication of the United States' leadership in the world. It is tantamount to saying that Congress should contract out decisions on national security to foreign governments: Paris, Beijing, Damascus.

The United Nations is not an autonomous authority. It is a place to conduct diplomacy between nations. Our Nation's security and sovereignty are inextricably intertwined. We do not subrogate our sovereignty to the United Nations. The United States, as the sole remaining superpower, must have a policy of restraint to international conflict management, but we